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The Rule of Rejoycing ;  
OR A  
DIRECTION  
FOR  
Mirth.  
IN A  
SERMON

Preached upon Trinity-Sunday, being the  
18th of June, in the Year of our  
Lord 1671.

---

By JOHN STRAIGHT, Master of Arts, sometime  
a Member of Queens-Colledge in Cambridge, now  
Vicar of Stonrepaine in the County of Dorset, and  
Chaplain to the Right Reverend Father in God,  
Dr. John Davenant, late Lord Bishop of Sarum.

*Temporibus gaudent, qui bona aeterna non norunt desiderare,*  
Aug. in Psal. 52.

*We will rejoice in thy Salvation, and triumph in the Name of*  
*the Lord our God, Psal. 20. 5.*

---

L O N D O N ,

Printed for Edward Thomas at the Adam and Eve  
in Little Britain, 1671.

ДИАЛОГИ  
СЕМЯН  
МОСКОВСКИХ  
СОЛДАТ  
СОВЕТЫ  
ДЛЯ  
СЕМЯН  
СОЛДАТ  
СОВЕТЫ

... A to tell me. You are who you  
were, and I am who I am. I am who  
I am, the God who I am, who I am.  
I am who I am. I have seen my God, and  
God has seen me. I have seen my God, and  
God has seen me.

¶ *Wachschlaf* kann man nicht haben, wenn man nicht schlafen will.

200% 3

1781 has written, odds are we're not the last to learn of it.  
1781 *quintessential*

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THE  
EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

*To his Loving Parishioners and good  
Neighbours, the Inhabitants of  
Stourepaine in the County of Dorset, JOHN  
STRAIGHT, their Aged Vicar, dedicateth this  
Rule of Rejoycing.*

*My good Neighbours,*

**T**HERE are too many plukt away  
with the Errours of these Seditious  
and Schismatical Times : How  
much it hath been my care to keep  
you upright, and preserve you  
from Schism, Faction and Separation, you cannot  
chuse but witness for me. I am now grown old,  
and ready to go the way of all Flesh ; and seeing  
I have received some part of my temporal  
Maintenance from you, I thought it meet for me,  
before I go hence, and be no more seen, to be-  
stow some spiritual Gift upon you, by which I  
might, by Gods Blessing upon it, so season your *Rom. 1. 11.*  
outward Enjoyments, as you might be furthered  
in your passage to that Countrey, which I  
trust you seek after. Give me leave to make use  
of a part of S. Peters Expression to the Cripple at  
the Temple Gate (*Such as I have, give I unto* *Heb. 11. 14.*  
*you*) *Acts 3. 6.*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*Phil. 3. 1.*

*you)* a few Printed Leaves of Paper, which are indeed the best Monuments and suitablest Remembrances that a Minister can leave behind him to his People; by which, he being dead, may (with *Abel*) yet speak unto you. If *S. Paul* was not ashamed to write the same things again, sure it is no presumption then in me to present that now to your views, which not long since I committed to your ears. It seemed welcome to you then; I hope you will kindly accept of it now; & not only entertain it as a testimony of my Love, and dear Affection to you, but that which is far better, *viz.* That you will make that good use of it, for which it was intended; which was, the rectifying of your Joy here while I am with you, and the continuance of your Comfort hereafter, when I am dead, and taken from you. If God shall move your hearts (as I trust he hath begun to do, and will more) to the entertainment of that which is the principal Subject of this Sermon, it will make you shun the Atheistical prophaneness of these Godless times, and bring that upon you, which is only able to make you happy; even that which will make your hearts stable and unblameable in Joyfulness; which is the hearty Prayer of him that is

*Your very Loving Vicar, and  
continual Suppliant to the  
Throne of Grace for you all.*

*JOHN STRAIGHT.*

# To all READERS whatsoever.

**T**He Merchant that kath once put to See,  
though he meet with some miscasualties in  
his Voyage, is yet commonly apt to make an-  
other Adventure. It hath been my hap, by the per-  
swasion of some prevalent Friends, to make two ad-  
ventures already before this; My Ship is once again  
launched, and let loose to the swelling waves of ma-  
licious Censure. The boisterous blasts of such vain  
winds dismay me not, nor do the multitude of pil-  
fering Pyrates, who by their prating, endeavour to  
rob men of their good Names, put a stop to my course,  
or cause me to strike sail. The blessed Apostle tells me,  
that he was thrice shipwrackt, that he was in perils  
often, and among the rest, especially amongst false  
Brethren. How can I then look to be free from such  
perils? No, no, so long as there are so many of but  
little Judgment, and less Honesty, I neither can, nor  
do expect to escape their stripes. But as for such, I  
shall take up the same Apostles resolution, and say **1 Cor. 4.3.**  
with him, that I pass very little to be judged of them.  
There are too many so proud, and self-conceited, that  
they think nothing well done, but what they do them-  
selves; such Readers commonly usurp the office of  
rash Judges, and so, instead of Lectores, they become  
Lictores. To such, I shall apply my blessed Savicours  
words, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the  
evil; if well, why then do you smite me with your **John 18, 23**  
detracting Tongues? If my God approve me, I pass  
not for mans censure. As for that Thredbare dry deri-  
sion, of being a Fool in Print, I can as chearfully  
bear it, as David sometime did the Taunts of Michol, **2 Sam. 6.**  
**and 20, 21, 22.**

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## To the Reader.

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and be as well pleased to be esteem'd a Fool for the communication of good things, as S. Paul was contented to be accounted a Fool for Christ's sake. I shall

<sup>1 Cor. 4.10.</sup> now dismiss the captious and cavilling Reader with Martial's Distich :

Martial.

Cum tua non edas, carpis mea Carmina Leli ?  
Carpere vel noli nostra, vel ede tua.

And so turning to the truly Religious and well affected Readers, who read to profit, and not to pick Holes; To you, dear Christians, I willingly present this Sermon, with Jacobs Blessing and Prayer for his Sons; God Almighty send thee mercy in the

<sup>Gen. 43.14.</sup> sight of the man, &c. You have here (good Friends) a Rule of Rejoycing, a Direction for your Mirth; accept it from me, & apply it to your selves; do as Elisha did to the Child he raised from death to life; he

<sup>2 Kin. 4.33,</sup> stretch'd himself over the Child, he put his mouth on the Childs mouth, his eies on his eies, his hands

on his hands, and therewithal he joyned prayers, and the Child revived; so do you also, compare your selves with this pattern, measure out your joy with this Rule; where you find a conformity, give thanks to God for it; and where not, pray to God to quicken you, that you may grow in an holy similitude and conformaty to this Rule. And if these little fruits of my Ministry may serve any way to guide you in your journey towards Heaven, it shall be no small com-

<sup>Gal. 2. 2.</sup> fort to me, that I have not run nor laboured in vain. And seeing all good things come from above, I therefore commend you to the Father of Lights, who is able

<sup>1 Pet. 1. 8.</sup> to make you rejoice in him, with joy unspeakable and glorious; and rest,

Yours to serye you in what I may.

JOHN STRAIGHT.



The Rule of REJOYCING,  
OR,  
A Direction for MIRTH.

IN A

SERMON

Preached in the Parish-Church of Stoure-  
paine in the County of Dorset, on the  
18th of June, 1671.

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Pbil. 4. 4.

*Rejoyce in the Lord alway, again I  
say, Rejoyce.*



Hat which Seneca sometime said of Learning, I may, and that not unfitly, affirm of Joy: *Vita sine Literis mors est, vivumque hominis Sepulchrum*; so he: *Vita sine gaudio mors est, vivumque hominis Sepulchrum*; so I. A Life without Learning (He) without Joy (I) is a meer Death, and but the living Sepulcher of man. A short Life, if joyous, is far better than a long Age; if mixt, and continually clogg'd

with anxious Molestations : Much rather should I chuse to live a few dayes here in merry gladness, than desire to accomplish the prolonged years of *Methuselah* in sullen sadness. Heaviness of heart is the Curse of God. 'Tis a great enemy to our health, whicj God hath bound us to take care of: It dries the Bones; and briefly, it gives great advantage to Satan, who like a roaring Lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour. 'Tis an old Saying, that *Melancholia est Vehiculum Daemonum*; and Experience proves, that we are never so weak, never so apt to receive the Temptations of Satan, never so unable to resist them, as when we are oppres'd with Melancholy and Sadness of heart: For this cause S. Paul chargeth the Corinbians to comfort the incestuous person, *lest Satan (saith he) circumvent us; for we are not ignorant of his Devices.* Look upon David, a man after Gods own heart, as the Scripture stiles him; and yet see to what an inconvenience sadness, and plodding too much on the losf of his Son *Absalom* brought him; see how unlike himself it made him. And so Job, concerning whom the Lord gives also a large Testimony; *an upright and just man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil:* Yet observe how far he forgets himself, by yielding too much to sadness and heaviness of heart: he is angry with the Light, quarrels with the Night, hath a Saying to the Stars, to his Mother, to the Midwife; there is no dealing with him in his Fit.

Instances of this kind, there be more than enough; but they are unpleasant. Without Joy, there is no contentment in any thing. Who would wish for Life it self, but to take some joy and comfort in it? Joy is all in all: Well therefore doth our Apostle apply himself to press this Duty upon the *Philippians* in the words of our Text; *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, again I say, rejoice.*

In which words observe these four Particulars.

1. A Duty enjoyned, viz. Rejoycing; Rejoyce.

2. The

2. The Limitation of this Duty ; our Rejoycing must not be carnal, but spiritual, *non in Seculo, sed in Domino* ; it must not be in the World, but in the Lord ; *Rejoice in the Lord.*

3. The Extent of this Duty of Rejoycing : It must not be at one time, and not at another ; it must not be only now at Trinity-Tide, your usual time of Merriment, and enjoyment of your Friends and Acquaintance, and no more till that time comes again in a Revolution ; but it must be all the year long, even as long as we live [alway] *Rejoice in the Lord alway.*

4. And Lastly , The Ingemination of this Duty of Rejoycing ; *Again I say, Rejoyce :* As if S. Paul should have laid, I exhort you not unto this duty of Rejoycing suddenly nor rashly, out of a merry pin (as we commonly say) but out of a serious and sober deliberation ; and therefore I say again, Rejoyce. *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, again I say, Rejoyce.* Of these in their Order.

And first, of the first ; The Duty enjoyned by the Apostle to every good Christian, Rejoycing. *Rejoyce.*

Doct. *It is then the Duty of all Gods Children to be joyful. It is the Duty of all Gods Children to be cheerful.* Doct.

O come let us rejoyce unto the Lord, saith the Psalmist. *Lst Psal. 95. 1. us serve the Lord with gladness, and come before him with Psal. 100. 2. joyfulness. Let us enter into his Gates with praise, and into Psal. 100. 4. his Courts with rejoycing. All people clap your hands, sing Psal. 47. 1. aloud unto God with a joyful voice,* saith David. This Disposition, we see, was in the blessed Virgin Mary, *Luke 1. 47. when she said, that her Spirit rejoiced in God her Savio.* There is no man but would have his busines done with Cheerfulness ; and therefore Solomon saith, that *a suggish Pro. 10. 26. or dull Agent, is as Vinegar to the Teeth, or as Smoke to the Eyes.* It is a matter of vexation and trouble, to see any thing performed with lumpish heaviness. God himself is all Spirit, and he will be served with our Spirits ;

*Exod. 13.  
12, 13.*

he can endure none but cheerful Servitors. In the time of the Ceremonies, when God had appointed, that the first-born of a mans Beasts should be set apart to him, it was with this exception; If it were the first Foal of an Ass, it should be redeemed with a Lamb; if it were not redeemed, the Neck of it was to be broken; God would not have that to be sacrificed unto him. Some, not unaptly, make this to be meant by it, that God so appointed, as an evidence of his detestation of dulness and want of Life and Cheerfulness in good things, an Ass being one of the dullest Creatures (for which cause, I conceive, Sloth is wont to be pictured riding upon an Ass) God would not be honoured by the Sacrifice of such a Beast. It is the Badge of Christs People, that they come willingly at the time of assembling. And I *rejoyced*, saith

*Psal. 110.3. David, when they said unto me, we will go unto the House  
Psal. 122.1. of the Lord. Those Services that are offered unto God without cheerfulness, they never find acceptance.*

And truly great reason have Gods Children to *rejoyce*, and to serve him with alacrity: For,

*Reas. 1. First, Their Sins are forgiven them, and that is a just  
Matth. 9.2. cause of joy. Son, be of good cheer (saith our Saviour Christ) thy Sins are forgiven thee.*

*2. Secondly, God is reconciled unto them in Christ, and delights in them, and that is another just cause of joy. Let him that glorieth (saith the Lord) glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness. This is that loving kindness and mercy, which being shed abroad in the heart by the holy Ghost, is better than life, as the Psalmist speaks; The*

*Psal. 63. 3. Soul is satisfied with it as with Marrow and Farness.*

*Psal. 63. 5. St. Paul calleth this Joy in the Holy Ghost: The Holy*

*Rom. 14.17. Ghost works it in the heart, and that witness of the Spi-*

*Rom. 8. 16. rit is the Ground of it. St. Peter, for the dignity of it,*

*1 Pet. 1. 8. commends it to be both unspeakable and glorious. The An-*

*Luke 2.10. gels to the Shepherds called it great joy. Our blessed Sa-*

*John 16.24. viour stiles it a full joy. And the Psalmist terms it the joy*

*of*

of Gods people, as being their Peculiar : The Stranger *Ps.106.5.*  
from the Common-wealth of *Israel* meddles not with  
this Joy.

*Use 1. Instruct.*

The Religious Life then is the merry Life. Those that do unfeignedly fear God, and have set their hearts to please him, are the only men of the world, that have just cause to be cheerful, that have just cause to be comfortable, that have just cause to be joyful. *Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord,* saith the Prophet *Da-* *Psal.105.3..*  
*vid:* *And shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart.* *Psal.32.11.*

*Use 2. Reproof.*

Let this then be a check to our common Limpishness, and a reproof to our usual uncheerfulness : Let it serve to correct that deadnes of Spirit which doth generally discover it self in our performances of Religious Duties. Men many times look, when they are hearing, or otherwise attending upon the other Services of Gods House, as if they had no heart to them ; as if (were it not for shame) they would say with those *Jews* that the Prophet *Malachy* speaks of, in plain terms, *Behold it is a weariness.* The thoughts of many are even tired and spent, before an hour be half out ; witness that common deadnes, and filthy drowsines, to which many do give themselves over, even in the midst of the Congregation. Oh, look to your Affections, Beloved ! God looks for cheerfulness in his Service. He would have nothing taken of any towards the erecting of the Tabernacle, unless it were of him that had a *willing heart.* Strive therefore, Oh strive, I say, *Exod.35.5.* against your wonted sluggishnes, and when you feel a kind of heavines to creep upon you, do you check your selves for it ; rouze up your selves, and blame your selves, who in other things can be so jocund and fresh, and yet be so heavy, like men struck on the head, when matters

matters appertaining to the Service of God are in hand,  
Remember the Duty enjoyned here by the Apostle ; Re-  
joyce.

*Tho. Aq.*

Rejoyce ; yes : but what is this joy you perswade us unto ? The Angelical Doctor tells you, that it is *Passio mentis excitata ex opinione praesentis boni, vel expectatione futuri* ; Joy (saith he) is a passion of the Mind stirred up from an opinion of some present, or at least from an expectation of some future good. Now (Beloved) seeing Gods Children have not only an opinion of some present, but a most certain expectation of some future good too, therefore they of all men have most cause to rejoyce, and serve their God with gladness. But to give you yet a more Divine Description of true Joy : True joy indeed is a spiritual motion wrought in the minds and hearts of the Faithful by the Holy Ghost, proceeding from their Reconciliation to God by Faith in Christ. Hence is that of *Casarius*, *Verum gaudium non possidetur, nisi pax & justitia teneatur* ; *prima enim est & quasi radix Justitia, secunda Pax, tertia Gaudium* ; *de Justitia nascitur Pax, de Pace Gaudium generatur* : That is, True Joy is not there to be found, where Peace and Righteousnes is forsaken ; for Righteousness which proceeds from our reconciliation to God by Faith in Christ, is first, and as it were, the root of all ; Peace of Conscience second, issuing from the former ; and lastly, true joy springing from both ; from Righteousness comes Peace, and from Peace proceeds true Joy.

This is the joy S. Paul enjoynes the *Philippians* to observe in our Text, and this is that joy which I commend to you to embrace. Would you be joyful ? would you be cheerful ? Would you be merry indeed ? Oh then labour for Righteousness, whence Peace of Conscience will undoubtedly proceed, and thence unspeakable Joy will necessarily follow. *Gaudete in veritate, non in ini-  
quitate ; gaudete in spe aeternitatis, non in flore vanitatis*, as Venerable *Beda* hath it ; that is, Rejoyce in Verity, not in Iniquity ; rejoyce in the hope of Eternity, not in  
the

*Cesar. 2.  
Admon.*

*Beda.*

the fading flower of Vanity : And thus I am fallen upon my second Particular, which is the Limitation of this Duty enjoyned, express'd in these words, *& Rejoice in the Lord. Rejoyce in the Lord.*

## The Second Part, Limitation.

This (Beloved) is the qualifying, the seasoning, and the bounding of our Mirth ; It must be in the Lord : Why ? *Vllumne gaudium nisi in Domino?* faith Aug. Yes, there is, as the same Father hath it, *Gaudium Vanitatis*, as well as *Gaudium Veritatis* ; that is, there is a joy of Vanity, as well as a joy of Verity. There is a twofold joy, there is a hellish joy, and there is a holy joy ; the one is inhibited, the other imposed. The vain joy of the world, or rather, the worlds joy in vanity, is interdicted ; the holy joy, the joy of verity, the rejoicing in the Lord, that is it which is here enjoyned in our Apostles Edict, *Rejoyce in the Lord.*

Obs. *Rejoycing in the Lord is the only true rejoicing.* Obs.

*Illud est verum ac summum gaudium* (saith S. Bernard) Bern. in  
*quod non de Creatura, sed de Creatore concipitur, quod cum Serm.*  
*acceperis, nemo tollet a te; cui aliunde comparata, omnis*  
*jucunditas miseror est, omnis suavitas dolor est, omne dulce*  
*amarum est, omne decorum foedum est, omne postremo quod*  
*delectari potest, molestum est.* That is true, and excellent  
joy indeed (saith that Father) which is conceived in the  
Creator, and not in the Creature ; which when thou hast  
received, no man can take from thee ; to which, if all  
other rejoicing and pleasure be compared, they be but  
painfulness, all other sweetnes but sadness, all other de-  
lightfulness but dulnes, all other comeliness but filthi-  
ness ; and in a word, all other mirth but madness.

The comfort which the Soul feels in Gods favour, in  
the pardon of sin, is that which indeed deserves to be ter-  
med Joy and Rejoycing. And

Reas. i.

And that first, Because it will overcome and swallow up all other occasions of Sadness and Discouragement ; it sweetens all afflictions whatsoever ; it resolves the Soul, that how sharp soever they are in a present sense, yet they are the Lords Chastenings to prevent future Condemnation ; for when we are judged (saith the Apostle) we are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world.

2.

Secondly, Rejoycing in the Lord is the only true Rejoycing, because it is lasting ; it abides by us when all other joyes forsake us : Christ commends it to his Disciples, by the name of a Joy which no man could take from them. It may indeed, I confess, sometime be interrupted and overclouded with sad Passions, but it can never be clean extinguished. God doth sometime so hide away his face from his dearest ones, for their humiliation, that they are troubled, and that not a little ; but it is an absolute and never-failing truth, that he will turn again and

Psal. 71.20.

quicken them, that his people may rejoice in him. As for the joy that is in outward things, as in the wealth, honour, pleasure and glory of this Life, it is but vanishing,

Ecc. 7. 8.

like the noise of Thorns under a Pot, as the wise man tells us, which crackle and blaze exceedingly for a while, but are quickly out. It is a short rejoicing, even a joy but

Job 20. 5.

for a moment, as Zophar tells us ; The rejoicing of the wicked is short (saith he) and the joy of Hypocrites is but a moment. As the things themselves are transitory and uncertain, so must that joy that is taken in them be ; Vanity it self is not more light. And then, for the most part, these shallow, and soon drying Streams of outward joy, they do empty themselves into a Sea of Heaviness : They are as a short Winters day, the fairness whereof, in regard of some breakings out of the Sun, is at last swallowed up into a gloomy and tempestuous night. But that

Psal. 97. 11.

Light which is sown for the righteous (as the Psalmist speaketh) and that Joy which is prepared for the upright in heart, though it be sometime darkned, yet it never goes out : It doth alwayes scatter and disperse, like the

Sun

Sun in his strength, all Clouds of Affrightment, and all  
Mills of Discontentment whatsoever. This relieves the  
Soul, whenas other joyes do deceive a man, *like a Brook*,  
as holy Job speaks, which, when we want water, is dry, *Job 6.15.*  
and when we have no need, overflows. This Joy there-  
fore, is the only true Joy: This rejoicing in the Lord,  
is the only true rejoicing.

This Doctrine is a Direction for the guiding and order- *Use.*  
ing of our Desires in the matter of joy. Our Nature  
affects joy; it is every mans wish, if he could, to have  
a glad heart; but in the point it self touching joy, and  
concerning gladness, therein generally we mistake. One  
man placeth his joy in this, *that his Substance is great, Job 31.25.*  
*and that his hand hath gotten much,* as Job speaks: Ano-  
ther is glad with *Hanan, for his great Promotion:* A Ta- *Esth. 5.11.*  
ble richly deck'd, an overflowing Cup, and a faring de-  
liciously every day, there is the *Epicures* joy: They  
most dote upon that mad Mirth which *Solomon* speaks of; *Eccl. 2.2.*  
and if they may live in pleasures and wantonnes, ma-  
king to morrow as to day, and have their Houses peace-  
able, and without fear, without any Rod of God upon  
them, then they are glad; and many Fools are apt to  
think them happy who live thus: O, say they, they  
live a brave life, as men enjoying their imagined feli-  
city. But alas! how much are men deceived herein?  
what are all those joys in comparison of this we are now  
treating of? Indeed if it be rightly considered, what  
true comfort can a man take in any thing, so long as he  
knoweth not how the case standeth between God and his  
own Soul? What true comfort, I say, can any man  
have, so long as he knows not what shall become of him  
at the day of the great account and reckoning for his  
sins? Howsoever the Devil teacheth men to forget the  
consideration hereof, that so he may lead them on like an  
Oxe to the slaughter, or as a Fool that goes to the Stocks  
for correction, not knowing that they are in danger: Yet  
if ever at any time the Conscience be a little awakened  
to think on this, the very remembrance of it is like the

*Dan. 5. 6.* beholding of the hand upon the Wall to *Belshazzar*, which when he saw it, put him quite out of his humour of Jollity ; it was not the presence of his Princes, nor the company of his Wives and Concubines, nor the beholding of the Golden Vessels which he had taken out of the Temple of the Lord, nor the pleasing taste of the Wine which was before him, none of these could keep his countenance from changing, nor his thoughts from troubling him. Nothing indeed can overcome the terror and amazement which is wont to astonish the Soul guilty of sin in its own apprehension, and sensible of the terror of the Lord, and yet ignorant withall, and without all manner of assurance to be pardoned. Think, Oh think seriously with thy self in what a case thy Soul will be, when as thou art breathing out thy last Breath, and art even ready to be driven out of the world by a violent and tormenting sickness ; when thou shalt see the sins of thy Life mustering together before thee, and the just wrath of God ready to seize upon thee, and Hell in thy own conceit even wide gaping to receive thee, and yet ha' t no feeling of this joy issuing out of the knowledge of Gods being graciously reconciled to thee in his Son. Oh then (Dear Christians) let us labour for this joy above all ; let us never give any rest to our thoughts, till we be brought to hear of this gladness in the Lord : A Dram of this is better than all the mirth in the world beside, and shall be a secret comfort of thy Soul, when all that the Earth affords, cannot yield thee so much as a drop of true refreshing.

*Rev. 9. 7.* Wicked joys are like those Locusts, upon whose heads were not Crowns, but as if it were Crowns (not of Gold, but) like Gold : their Faces were (not, but) as it were Faces of men ; their Hairs (not indeed, but) as it were the Hairs of Women ; their Breastplates, as it were Breastplates of Iron : All these were shadowy and similitudinary ; but there were stings in their Tails, as you may see at the 10th. verse, not as it were, but true stings indeed. *Gaudent falsis bonis, pereunt veris tormentis ; Men call*

call for mirth and jollity here, as the *Philistines* did for *Sampson*, to make them sport, and it pulls down the *House upon their heads*. It is better (saith S. *Gregory*) in the words of *Solomon*, *to enter into the house of mourning, than the habitation of such rejoicing*. How foolish is it for a little tickling of the Palat, to hazard eternal comfort? to adventure our drowning in eternal perdition? Let us therefore (beloved Brethren) think of the joy of this world as it deserves, viz. with contempt; for alas, how little can it do for us? and that little, with what deceit? What is thy heart the better? or what the merrier for all these false joys wherewith at any time it hath befriended thee? When did it offer Honey, but it brought a Sting withal? When did it tender thee Milk and Slumber, without a Nail and a Hammer? Just like *Goats* Kiss, it is still attended with a secret Stab. It is no good purchase, to procure an endless wo, for a little sliding shadow of contentment. Believe them that have bought their experience dear. It is better to avoid this joy, *ante gustum, quam post fastidium*, before we have tasted it, than after we have surfeited on it. The more hold we take of this, the more we lose our hold upon God. Turn ye therefore, my beloved Brethren, from this vain, false, and short joy that seeks you, and seek that joy of verity, that joy in the Lord, which shall for ever content, and never cloy you.

*Jud. 4. 21.**2 Sam. 20.*

9.

But what (may some man say) may we not rejoice at all in temporal things? May we not chearfully enjoy those outward things that God hath been pleased to bestow upon us?

Yes Beloved, I deny not but you may, so as you *Answ.* take these two Cautions along with you:

*First*, You must have a diligent care to prevent Excesses. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do else, *1 Cor. 10.* all must be done to the Glory of God. Gluttony and *31.* Drunkenness are the works of Darkness, contrary to honest walking; you must take heed therefore lest at any *Rom. 13.13.* time your hearts be oppressed with them. *Luke 21.34*

C 2

Secondly,

*Secondly*, You may rejoice in the enjoyment of these outward things, always provided that God be not banished out of your thoughts : We may be merry, but God must be by : we may please our selves, so long as we displease not him. All our joy is not reserved for the next life, some is afforded us on earth ; Gods greater Light doth not extinguish the less. Friends, Children, Wine, Oyl, Health, Liberty, Competency, are not given us for discontent ; we may not make them indeed Gods Rivals, but we may rejoice in them as Gods Blessings. In themselves, they are nothing ; in him, they are worth our joy. They wrong Christians, that forbid them mirth : The Gospel is not such dull Measur'd

Liske 2.10. The Gospel is not such dull Metal, but the Tidings of joy to all Believers. When the Lord hath made us happy, he gives us no thanks to make our selves miserable. If we find God reconciled, Christ our Advocate, the Holy Spirit our Comforter; if we have peace in our Conscience, and in Heaven an Inheritance, we should be both angry and ashamed.

*Psal. 42.11.* ask on earth that Question, *Why art thou sad, or cast down, Oh my Soul!* If we be in Christ, our very bread is a Symbole of the Bread of Life; and our Wine and Beer, a Token of that Cup we shall drink in Heaven. What should discomfort us, if the Lord be with us? Only let's be sure, that our Delights exclude not the Presence of God. Rejoyce we may; nay, rejoyce we must; it is our duty enjoyned by the Apostle; but look we to the Limitation, that the Lord be in it. *Rejoyce in the Lord,*

### *The Third Part, The Extent.*

I have done with two parts of my Text, The *Duty*, and the *Limitation* of it. I shall now proceed to the Third, which is the *Extent* of the Duty, in the word *πάντοτε*, *alway*; *χαλιπέτε εἰς Κύπρο πάντοτε*; *Rejoyce in the Lord alway.*

This seems at first view a strange Paradox, an intricate Riddle, nay indeed a mere contradiction: For how can we

we weep, lament and sorrow too, as our blessed Saviour himself hath said we shall; and yet rejoice also, and that alwayes too, as the Apostle here saith we should? *Rejoyce in the Lord alway:* How is it possible that weeping and rejoicing should comply and agree together in one and the same Subject, at one and the same time? Do not Contraries expel each other? Yes (Beloved) they do indeed; but these are not contraries: Christian Rejoycing and Christian Mourning do well agree together in one and the same Subject, at one and the same time too.

Take a Similitude from a Traveller, to illustrate this unto you. A Traveller may rejoice to see the Sun shîne, and yet he may be sorrowful too at the very same time, to behold some Clouds arising to eclipse his Light from him. So it is (Beloved) with Gods Children, they may rejoice to see the Sun of Gods Favour shining comfortably upon them, and yet at the same time, they may weep too, to behold some of their cloudy sins arising to obscure it.

*Nullus enim justus & sanctus caret peccato,* Aug.

*nec tamen ex hoc desinit esse justus vel sanctus, cum affectu*  
*teneat Sanctitatem.* There is no man so righteous or holy as to be without sin, and yet he ceaseth not to be righteous or holy, so long as he affecteth Holiness: so S. Aug.

The burning Bush in which God appeared to Moses, that was not burnt up because God was in it, sheweth us how Gods Church and Chosen, may both weep continually, and yet rejoice continually too. Weep they must continually, because they are alwayes compassed about with the fiery flames of Affliction: Again, rejoice they must continually, because they are not consumed, but comforted by God in the midst of all calamities.

We have seen, saith S. Gregory, *Clouds dissolving themselves into drops upon the Earth, and yet the Sun-beams resplendently reflecting refreshment on the same, at the same instant of time.* So it is with Gods Children here on Earth, the doleful Clouds of sin, and affliction for sin, do often distil Chrystal showers from their eyes, and yet the Sun of Righteousness shines at the same instant most comfortably in

*Exod. 3. 2.*

*Greg.*

in their hearts, and causeth them to rejoice; witness  
*Psal. 94. 19.* holy *David*, who tells us, that in the multitude of the  
 sorrows of his heart, Gods Comforts still refreshed his  
 Soul.

We will now descend to the demonstration of this unto  
 you in some few Particulars. Six Causes I have former-  
 ly observed (in my Sermon on the 16th. of *John*, at the  
 20th. verse, Printed in the Year 1643.) to move the  
 Righteous to weep continually; but, lo, now I bring you  
 twice so many more Causes out of Gods Storehouse, to  
 make them rejoice even in the same things alwayes.

<sup>1.</sup>  
*Psal. 6. 6.* The first cause of their weeping is for their own sins  
*Luke 7. 38.* against God: This made *David* every night to water  
*his Couch with his Tears.* This made *Mary Magdalene*  
 weep as if she poured forth water, not by drops, but by  
*Math. 26.* floods: This made *Peter* weep bitterly; yea, and this  
*75.* made S. *Paul* cry out heavily, *Miser ego homo, quis me  
 eripiet? &c.* *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deli-*  
*Rom. 7. 24.* *ver me from the body of this death?*

<sup>1</sup>  
*John 2. 2.* Yes, blessed Saint, thou hast a Deliverer, Jesus Christ  
 our Lord, he is the *Propitiation for thy sins, and not for  
 thine only, but for all the sins of all the Elect.* Rejoyce  
 therefore in this Oh ye Righteous; first, Because there is  
*Rom. 8. 1.* *no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* And  
 then, secondly, Because you walk not after the *Flesh, but  
 after the Spirit.* Your sins are remitted, and therefore  
 you have cause to be cheerful. If there be sorrow in the  
 contrition of sin, much more then is there joy in the re-  
 mission of sin. One dram of this joy out-values all the  
 loads of the other sorrow. Like men over-burdened, we  
 feel most comfortable ease, when the Cross of Christ takes  
 all this weight from our shoulders. When sin is remit-  
 ted, nothing can much afflict. The greatest sorrow to  
 the heart penitent, proves the greatest joy to the heart  
 pardoned. It is not possible, for joy and comfort to be  
 there absent, where Gods kindness is present. Can that  
 heart be void of Consolation, which is inhabited by the  
 God of Consolation? May he who hath the Fountain and  
 Ocean

Ocean of Gladness within him, remain a dry Pit, and be utterly empty and void of gladness? No, no, they who have been pressed with the burden of sin, will be much refreshed with deliverance from it. They who have been terrified with the guiltiness of sin, and the horrible sight of Damnation, cannot chuse but be joyful at the pardon thereof, when their Souls are lifted up with the hope of Salvation: As Oyl will overtop all other Liquors, and cannot be kept under, so will this joy overtop all other Sorrows, and cannot be suppressed.

The second cause of Gods Childrens weeping here on Earth, is for the sins of others. *Davids Eyes gush'd out with Rivers of Tears, because men kept not Gods Laws.* Psal. 119. 136.  
*And righteous Lot mourns for the ungodly conversation of the wicked Sodomites: For he being righteous (saith S. Peter) and dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous Soul from day to day, with their unlawful deeds.* Yet they are to rejoice in this also: First, Because God keepeth them from committing such sins as others do commit; because they are preserved from running with others into the same excess of riot: And then, Secondly, Because God will wound the hairy scalp of such as go on still in their wickedness. *And the Righteous shall rejoice (saith the Psalmist) when he seeth the vengeance.* 1 Pet. 4. 4. Psal. 58.10.

Thirdly, The Third Cause of their weeping is for the Judgments of God upon the Land. The Prophet Jeremiah weeps most abundantly for this; *Oh that mine head were full of water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the Daughter of my people!* The Captivity of Babylon marred the Mirth of Jerusalem: *How shall we sing the Lords Song in a strange Land?* Certainly, when God troubles the state of our Peace, he would trouble the eyes of our heads; when the Thunder shakes the Air, the Clouds weep to still it. Nothing is more without comfort than Darkness, nor is there any thing more without joy than Calamity: How then shall we rejoice in this, when the Judgments of God are abroad.

3.

*Jer. 9.1.**Psal. 137.4.*

broad in the Earth? Yes; thus Beloved. First, Because God hath hitherto preserved us from the Judgments upon the Land; as namely, from Plague, Pestilence, Fire, and Famine, from Battel, Murder, and sudden death; insomuch as we may say with the Prophet David, *A thousand have fallen at our left hand, and ten thousand at our right hand, but it hath not come near us.* Unto Gods Children there is alwayes comfort in calamity; unto the righteous there ariseth Light in Darknes: *They need not*

*Psal. 112.4. be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the Arrow that*

*Psal. 91.5. flieth by day.* And then secondly, They may rejoice again in this, that if so be it should please God to take them away by any sweeping Judgment, yet their Souls cannot be touched; they are sure to be saved, and to be

*Luk. 16.22 carried into Abrahams Bosom.* It is enough to make them rejoice in any Judgment whatsoever happens, to

*Rom. 8.28. know that it shall work together for the best for them.*

4. Fourthly, The Fourth cause of Gods Childrens weeping, is for the afflictions of poor Joseph, for them that are tossed from Post to Pillar; for them that are driven from house and home; in a word, for them that are for Christs sake brought to great extremity. *Mine eye casteth out Rivers of water* (saith the Prophet Jeremy) *for the destruction of the Daughter of my people; yea, mine eye droppeth without stay, and ceaseth not.* But how shall we rejoice in this? Yes, thus; First, Because the light afflictions of this present life do cause an eternal weight of Glory; yea, a far more excellent, and eternal weight of Glory, as the blessed Apostle assures us. And then, Secondly, because *Sanguis Martyrum est Semen Ecclesia*, because the blood of Martyrs is the seed of the Church. What is a few drops of Blood here, to the Kingdom of

*Jam. 1.2. Heaven hereafter?* *My Brethren* (saith S. James) *count it exceeding joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations.* What S. James? joy in trouble? joy in affliction? Will the world believe you S. James? Yes, the world of Elect will; they have proved it; they have learned this

this benefit by good experience, they have found their sorrows have been turned into joy; heaviness might endure for a night, but joy hath come in the morning. We are not destitute of comfort even here in the midst of fiery trials, blessed be God for it; but this is nothing to that which is to be revealed: The glory to come doth every way surmount the present afflictions of Gods Children: and therefore in this they have cause to rejoice also.

*Fifthly*, The Fifth cause of Gods Childrens weeping, is for the loss of dear Friends; thus David, we read, mourned for Jonathan; *Woe is me for thee my Brother Jonathan*. Thus Mary, yea, and Christ himself, do weep for Lazarus. And how shall we do to rejoice in this? Yes, thus we may, yea, and thus we must rejoice in this: First, Because they rest from their Labours: And secondly, Because they are delivered from the Evils to come. They are happy whose glas is well run out: *Fælices nimium quibus est Fætuna peræcta*; as the Poet most divinely. They rest from those Labours which tire us that live; and the works which we are to follow, follow them. And are not these sufficient Causes of rejoicing in that Particular?

*Sixthly*, and lastly, Gods Children are to weep, because they are but as Pilgrims and Strangers here on earth; *For therefore we sigh* (saith the Apostle) *desiring to be cloathed with our house which is from heaven*. Yet they are to rejoice in this too: First, Because they have most Royal Mansions prepared for them in heaven: And secondly, Because they are sure to be possessed of them in the end. Thus you see, Gods Children, though they be as sorrowing continually, yet are they also alway rejoicing. *Rejoice in the Lord alway*.

Dost thou feel now in thy self the Evidences and Pledges of the favour of God in Christ Jesus? Oh it is good for thee to rejoice in them! The Gospel is glad tidings of joy, yea, of great joy to all Believers. Dost thou find thy self sad, sullen and discontented? Oh check and chide thy self for thy unchearfulness: Take the Prophet David for thy Pattern, *Psal.42.5.* who no less than three times in two short Psalms together, rebukes himself for this very thing. *Why art thou cast down, Ps.43.5.*

2 Sam.1.26  
Jo.11.33, &  
35.

Rev.14.13.

5.

6.

2 Cor.5.2.  
Joh.14.2,3.

2 Cor.6.10.

*Job 15. 11,*  
*12.*

*Oh my Soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? Neglect not those divine Consolations that have been propounded to thee. Stir up and provoke thy self to this holy Duty in the extent of it; Re joyce in the Lord alway.* That which Eli-phaz sometime said to Job, , when he would not be comforted by God, nor by his Counsel, let me apply to the disconsolate, dejected and drooping Soul: *Are the Consolations of God small with thee? Is this thing strange unto thee? Why doth thine heart take thee away? and what doth inc ey.s mean? Seem the Consolations of God small unto thee?* Thou hast heard twice so many Causes of rejoicing, as there is of sorrowing, in the same Particulars; why then takest thou no more joy in God? why then takest thou no more comfort in Christ? why dost thou not rejoice in the Lord alway? Certainly, beloved, the true reason why we rejoice not enough, is, because we're not enough Christians.

*Well, would you now for the future practise this Aposto-lical precept of rejoicing in the Lord alway? then observe, I pray, these four Means following.* *First,* Get you a true justifying Faith; get you a good assurance of Salvation: this is a sure way to keep the heart cheerful. The Light of Gods countenance favourably shining upon us through Christ, adds more comfort, than when our Corn, and Wine, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.* and Oil is increased. The joy that groweth from this ground, *1 Pet. 1. 8.* is *un-speak-able and glori-ous.* This is able to make a man rejoice, when he hath never so many means to make him hea-*Rom. 5. 1, 3.* vy; for being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord: neither that only, but we also rejoice in tribulation. This it was that made Paul and Silas *Aet. 16. 25.* rejoice and sing in Prison. True Faith gives a man many sound grounds of comfort; it gives a man many Reasons of solid rejoicing: For, first, It assures him of the pardon of his sins, and when he once knows that, no affliction need trouble him, *Son, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee,* faith Christ to the sick of the Palsie: Thy sins which were the cause of thy Sicknes, they are forgiven, therefore be of good cheer.

*Secondly,* He that hath true Faith, knows that he shall never lose the favour of God, after he hath once obtained it, how

how many signes soever of Gods anger may be upon him ; and is not this a notable ground of rejoicing, when a man is by Faith perswaded, that *neither Life, nor Death, nor Rom. 8. 38, Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate him from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*Thirdly, He that hath true Faith, knows God will have a tender respect to his weaknes in whatsoever affliction he shall lay upon him, that it shall not exceed his strength ; God will be the strength of his Spirit ; God will support and enable him to bear it, that he faint not under it. God is faithful, saith the Apostle, and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able ; but will even give the issue with the temptation, that ye may be able to bear it.*

*Fourthly, He that hath true Faith, is assured that whatsoever affliction God layeth upon him, it shall in the end tend to his good, and to the furtherance of his Salvation. Also we know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called according to his purpose. So S. Paul.*

*Fifthly, He that hath true faith, knows the end will pay for all, and that after a while all tears shall be wiped from his eyes, and he shall enjoy unspeakable comfort. I should Psal.27.13. have fainted, saith David, except I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the living. And this of the first Means of continual rejoicing : If you would rejoice in the Lord alway, you must then get you a true justifying Faith, a good assurance of your salvation.*

*Secondly, A second Means to rejoice alway, is to take care to keep a good Conscience. That man that in all things is careful to please God, and to keep his Conscience pure, that he fall not into any known and grievous sin, shall ever have a quiet and cheerful heart ; he may rejoice always : Our rejoicing is this, saith S. Paul, even the testimony of our 2 Cor.1.12. Conscience, that in simplicity and godly pureness, we have had our conversation in the world. This will make a man cheerful at all times, not in prosperity only, but even in adversity also ; and therefore Solomon calls it a continual Feast. And Pro. 15.15. D 2 in*

*Eph. 6. 14.* in this respect the Apostle calleth Righteousness (*a Breastplate*) that will defend the heart even in the evil day. Would you therefore have a chearful heart? would you be comfortable, and rejoice always, even in affliction, in the time of your sickness, and at the hour of your death? have a care then of a good Conscience; take heed of known sins. That man only that in all things is careful to please God, and to keep his Conscience pure, that he fall not into any known and grievous sin, shall have a quiet and cheerful heart; he only may rejoice alwayes.

*Means 3.* *Thirdly*, The third Means to make us rejoice alway, is to make the Lord our Treasure, and not any earthly thing.

If a man do not overvalue these earthly Comforts, as namely, Husbands, Wives, Friends, Children, Health, Wealth, Liberty, Peace, &c. nor account them his chief treasure, but esteem them as they are indeed, even transitory Comforts; and account the Lord, and his Favour and Grace his chief Treasure: If a man set not his heart on these things, but love them only in the Lord, then shall he not be oppressed with immoderate sorrow for them, when God shall take them away: Such a man may rejoice still; whereas he that maketh these worldly things his chief Treasure, and setteth his heart upon them, he cannot rejoice alway; he must needs be oppressed with sorrow, when he shall be deprived of them. You may see it in the example of *Ahab*, who, when he could not get *Naboths* Vineyard, his spirit was exceeding sad, he could not eat his Bread: And why was he so vexed? Because his Pleasure was his Treasure, he loved *Naboths* Vineyard too well; it was even a death to him to be kept from it. To such then as have no felicity but in these earthly things, as namely, in their Wealth, in their Belly-chear, in their merry Company, in their Pastimes and Sports, in their brave Apparel, in their Credit and Favour with men, and the like:

To such as love these things more than God, to all such as affect them and care for them more than they do for God and his Grace, I may say as our blessed Saviour said in another case, Are these the things that you look upon? Have you no better Comforts than these? Alas, how woful will your case be when you must part with these things? Consider

*1 Kings 21.*

*5. 6.*

*Luke 21. 6.* and his Grace, I may say as our blessed Saviour said in another case, Are these the things that you look upon? Have you no better Comforts than these? Alas, how woful will your case be when you must part with these things?

sider of that which Job saith, *What hope hath the Hypocrite when he hath heaped up riches, if God take away his Soul ? Can he hope that God will hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him ?* will he set his delight on the Almighty, and call upon God at all times ? - Take off your affections from these terrestrial and transitory things here below, and set them on things above : Follow the advice of your blessed Saviour in S. Matthews Gospel ; *Lay not up treasure for your selves upon earth; but lay up treasures for your selves in Heaven :* and mark the reason which Christ there renders ; *for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* If you make earthly things your treasure, you can neither truly rejoice, nor alway rejoice ; you will either immoderately joy in them when you have them, or else immoderately grieve for them, when you shall come to want them. To take your thoughts therefore off from these things, and to set them right where they should be, set them on Gods Grace and Favour, that is a special means to make you rejoice alway. And to this end, that you may the better be enabled to make God and his Grace your Treasure, and not any earthly thing, Consider,

*First,* That these things are not your proper goods, but cast more plentifully on Reprobates than on Gods Children ; and therefore our Saviour calleth external goods another mans goods, because we are but Stewards of them, and must leave them ; but Gods Favour and Grace are our peculiar portion ; spiritual goods are our own, they shall never be taken away. *The Fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever,* saith the Psalmist.

*Secondly,* Consider also, that these earthly things are vain, and can yield us no hope, no comfort, nor no joy when we shall stand in need : *Riches avail not in the day of wrath,* saith Solomon ; but the sense of Gods Favour and Grace doth ; for that will yield us comfort and unspeakable joy, even in the greatest affliction. If therefore you would rejoice alway, take heed that you overvalue not these earthly Comforts, but make God, his Grace and favour your chiefest Treasure.

*Fourthly* and lastly, The fourth and last Means which I shall prescribe you to make you rejoice alway, is to be rightly persuaded of our Liberty in the use of the outward

*Mat. 6,19.  
20, 21.*

*Luk. 16,12.*

*Psal. 19,9.*

2.

*Prov. 11,4.*

*Means 4.*

comforts of this life ; as namely, good diet, good company, &c. Let no man say , that this means might well be spared, seeing most men are apt to stumble at it. No, for though this age be (I confess) a secure age, and too much set upon Jollity and carnal Mirth , yet must I prescribe this Means to such as know themselves to be reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. Many good souls there are that are apt to give great advantage to Satan, in the anguish of their Conscience, by perswading themselves, they should much offend God, if they should give liberty to themselves to enjoy the Creatures of God for their delight ; if they should keep company, or be merry at any time. Such as these are, have need of this Instruction ; to such as these are, I speak, and say , that a liberal use of the outward Comforts of this life, is a good and lawful Means to make them cheerful ; provided always that they exceed not the bounds of Sobriety. They that use these things without sobriety, and affect them too much, they shall never receive good by them. It is made the note of a man that shall never go to heaven, *to lift up his mind unto vanity.*

*Psal. 24.14.*

It is easie for a man to surfeit, and take too much

*Prov. 25.16*

of these things. *If thou have found Honey,* saith Solomon, *eat that that is sufficient for thee, lest thou be over-full, and vomit it.*

*Prov. 14.13*

Of the comfort and refreshing that many take in these things, that may be said, which Solomon likewise saith, that *the end of that mirth is heaviness.* Yet certainly there is great force in these things being rightly used, to keep the heart from being overcome with sadness, and to make it cheerful. Thus you have had the Duty of Rejoycing, the Limitation of it (*in the Lord*) and the Extent of it also, in the word (*alway*) discuss'd unto you : I come now in the last place to the fourth and last Particular observed in my Text, which is the Ingemination of this Duty of Rejoycing, in these words, *And again I say, Rejoyce.*

#### *The Fourth Part.*

What need, may some men say, is there of this Ingemination? What will the Apostle himself tautologize? Why should so short a Precept have so sudden an Iteration? Solomon (Beloved) in the last of his *Ecclesiastes*, makes my Answer

swer for me, where he saith, That the words of the wise are as Goads and Nails fastned by the Masters of the Assemblies. As Goads to prick us forward to our Duty, and as Nails to keep us within our compass. The Goad, you know, serves to quicken the dull Oxe, to make him mend his pace: So likewise doth our Apostles Ingemination here in our Text, serve to quicken us, to rouze us from our drowsie dulness, to a willing chearfulness in serving God all the tenour of our lives. Let us therefore serve the Lord with gladnes, non in amaritudine murmurationis, sed in uenititate dilectionis, as S. Augustine sweetly on the place: Else Gods plagues shall be evident signs, that he is offended with us, whose Curses shall come upon us, pursue us, and overtake us, till we be destroyed, and that, because we served not the Lord with gladness, as Moses tells Gods People in Deuteronomy.

De. t. 28.

45,46,47-

*Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoyce.*

S. Paul by doubling of this Duty of Rejoycing, strives to strike the Nail to the head, as we commonly say in our English Proverb: He endeavoureth to press the Duty home to the Conscience: A good pattern for us that are Ministers, to follow and imitate.

Obs. Every faithful Minister ought after S. Pauls example, to endeavour to bring Gods Word home to the Consciences of his Hearers. We must not handle the Word of God deceitfully; but in declaration of the Truth approve our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God. There is (Beloved) as much need (though many perhaps may think it superfluous) of Application and of pressing Duties home to the Consciences of our Hearers, as there was here of S. Pauls Ingemination. *Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem,* saith our Saviour Christ, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee! Why what? Would not one Jerusalem have served the turn here? No, no Beloved, our Saviour himself presseth *Jerusalem* most pathetically; he comes as near the quick as he could, to teach us this very duty of bringing the Word of God as close as we can to the Consciences of our Hearers.

And this we are to do for these three Reasons following: First, Propter cecitatem Intellectus, because of the blindnes R. 1.. of

Mat.23.37

of our understandings. Secondly, *Propter labilitatem Memoriae*; because of the slipperiness of our Memories. And thirdly, *propter perversitatem Voluntatum*; because of the perversity of our Wills and Affections.

R. 1. And first, we are to bring the Word of God as close as we can to the Consciences of our Hearers, *propter cecitatem Intellectus*, because of the blindnes of our Understandings: For although we are Eagle-ey'd in things belonging to the world, yet are we all by nature, I exclude none, as blind *Mar. 10.46* as Beetles, even as blind as *Bartimaeus*, in things pertaining to our everlasting salvation. *The Natural man perceiveth not 1 Cor. 2.14.* the things that are of God, neither indeed can he, saith the Apostle, because they are spiritually discerned. We have therefore need of Ingemination, we have need of Application, we have need of Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept.

R. 2. Secondly, We have need of this inculcation, this double commanding of Duty, *propter labilitatem Memoriae*, in regard of the slipperiness of our Memories; we are very forgetful, no sooner is a good admonition in at one ear, but instantly it is out at another, unless it be brought home unto the Conscience, that, that being awakened, may make us revolve it in our minds.

R. 3. Thirdly and lastly, There is great need that Gods Word should be pressed home to the Consciences of our hearers, *propter perversitatem Voluntatum*, because of the perversenes of our wills and affections, which are naturally averse from God and Goodness. *Vulnerata, sauciata, vexata, immoperdita est, vera confessione, non falsa defensione opus habet*, saith S. Aug. Preaching, of all Professions, hath the least hope to prevail, because it deals with the perverse will of man, which hath naturally no disposition to goodness: but rather indeed an opposition against it; an aversenes from good, and a perverseness in evil. And yet to work this will to goodness, is our Office; and the best way to do this, is to ingeminate, to reiterate, and double our Exhortations to Christian Duties unto you; for put case you should remember some good instructions from Gods word, yet if the will be not subjugated again and again, by Ingemination, and by pressing Application of them to it self, it will questionless

*Aug.*

less break out with the Jews into a *Nolumus obedire*, We will not have this man to rule over us, we will not obey. Come let Luke 19.14 us break his bonds in sunder, and cast away his Cords from us. Psal. 2. 3.

A Word now of Application, and so an end : Hath God *Applic.* indeed set his Ministers like Trumpets and Drums to call you to your Arms, to stir you up to Christian Duties? O then *Heb. 13.22.* dear Christians, do you suffer the words of Exhortation. Let it not be tedious nor irksom to you to be called upon again and again to the practise of any Christian Duty. The best in Gods Team stand in need of a pricking forward ; *2 Tim. 1.6.* there are none living but have need of a *Memento*. It is our Office to give you the Alarm ; be it your care to maintain the Battel. Take heed of kicking and flinging when you are spurred ; be not like an over-charged Cannon, which either bursts, or mischievously recoils against the Gunner, when he puts the Match unto it : No, no, be contented to hear of your Duty, and be careful to put it in practise too : Remember to whom the *Euge bone Serve* belongs at the great day ; not to the idle and sluggish person, but to the faithful, diligent and chearful Servant. *Matth. 25. 21.*

And now to draw to a Conclusion, and to wind up all in a word ; Call to mind dear Christians, the Duty enjoyned you here by the Apostle ; look to its Limitation ; consider its Extension ; and so ruminante upon its Ingemination, that you take up the Prophet *Habakkuk's* Resolution, *I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* And thus I leave you with this Rule of Rejoycing ; which if you well observe here, will bring you to the fulnes of joy hereafter, even to his presence at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore : To which fulnes of joy, and never fading pleasures, he in his good time bring us, who hath so dearly bought us, even Jesus Christ the righteous ; to whom with thee O Father, and thy blessed Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, Power and Dominion, Might and Majesty, now and for ever, *Amen.*









